**Ilex vomitoria ‘Pendula’: Weeping Yaupon Holly¹**

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson²

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**Introduction**

Weeping Yaupon Holly makes a very distinct, irregular, weeping form with its upright crooked trunks and slender, curved, pendulous branches clothed with small, oval, grey-green foliage. Many nursery operators produce this tree with several trunks in a clump. Capable of reaching 30 feet or more in height, Weeping Yaupon Holly is most often seen 15 to 20 feet tall with a spread of only 6 to 12 feet. Old plants will spread to 25 feet. The inconspicuous male and female flowers appear on separate plants and are followed in fall and winter by a spectacular display of the translucent red berries which attract wildlife. The flowers attract bees for several weeks. Purchase plants with berries on them (females) if you want a berry-producing tree.

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**General Information**

**Scientific name:** Ilex vomitoria  
**Pronunciation:** EYE-eks vom-i-TOR-ee-uh  
**Common name(s):** Weeping Yaupon Holly  
**Family:** Aquifoliaceae  
**USDA hardiness zones:** 7A through 9B (Fig. 2)  
**Origin:** native to North America  
**Invasive potential:** weedy native  
**Uses:** parking lot island < 100 sq ft; parking lot island > 200 sq ft; parking lot island 100-200 sq ft; tree lawn 3-4 feet wide; tree lawn 4-6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; street without sidewalk; container or planter; deck or patio; screen; specimen; urban tolerant; highway median; Bonsai  
**Availability:** not native to North America

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**Description**

- **Height:** 15 to 30 feet
- **Spread:** 6 to 12 feet
- **Crown uniformity:** irregular
- **Crown shape:** weeping, upright/erect
- **Crown density:** open
- **Growth rate:** moderate
- **Texture:** fine

**Foliage**

- **Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)
- **Leaf type:** simple
- **Leaf margin:** serrulate, crenate
- **Leaf shape:** ovate
- **Leaf venation:** brachidodrome, pinnate, reticulate
- **Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen
- **Leaf blade length:** less than 2 inches
- **Leaf color:** green
- **Fall color:** no color change
- **Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

- **Flower color:** white/cream/gray
- **Flower characteristics:** not showy

**Fruit**

- **Fruit shape:** round
- **Fruit length:** less than .5 inch
- **Fruit covering:** fleshy
- **Fruit color:** red
- **Fruit characteristics:** attracts birds; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

**Trunk and Branches**

- **Trunk/bark/branches:** branches droop; not showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns
- **Pruning requirement:** little required
- **Breakage:** resistant
- **Current year twig color:** gray
- **Current year twig thickness:** thin
- **Wood specific gravity:** unknown

**Culture**

- **Light requirement:** full sun, partial sun or partial shade
- **Soil tolerances:** sand; loam; clay; acidic; alkaline; well-drained; extended flooding
- **Drought tolerance:** high
- **Aerosol salt tolerance:** high

**Other**

- **Roots:** not a problem
- **Winter interest:** yes
- **Outstanding tree:** yes
- **Ozone sensitivity:** unknown
- **Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** resistant
- **Pest resistance:** resistant to pests/diseases

**Use and Management**

The tree is best used as an accent or specimen due to its unusual form, but planted about 8 to 10 feet apart makes a nice screen in the full sun. As the tree grows older next to a sidewalk or patio, lower branches can be removed to allow for pedestrians to pass beneath.

A sturdy North American native, Weeping Yaupon Holly is adaptable to a wide range of cultural conditions, from well-drained to wet, acid to alkaline, and sun to part-shade. It is very tolerant of drought and sea salt, and is one of the most durable and adaptable of the small-leaved evergreen Hollies for use in southern landscapes. Light pruning may be necessary to maintain shape, but unlike the species it requires less maintenance because it does not sprout from the roots.

Propagation is by cuttings.

**Pests**

Scale, leaf miners, mites, aphids appear to form a long list of problems, but none are normally serious.

**Diseases**

No diseases are of major concern.